



**NIFA Veterinary Medicine
Loan Repayment Program (VMLRP)**

National Institute of Food and Agriculture
US Department of Agriculture
OMB Information Collection
Approval No.: 0524-0046
Expiration Date: 8/31/2013

Veterinarian Shortage Situation Nomination Form

To be completed by the chief State or Insular Area Animal Health Official or his/her designee

Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program (VMLRP)

Nomination of Veterinarian Shortage Situations for the Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program (VMLRP) Authorized Under the National Veterinary Medical Service Act (NVMSA)

Note: Please submit one separate nomination form for each position. See solicitation for number of nominations permitted for your state or insular area.

Veterinary Shortage ID Code: NE117

Location of Veterinary Shortage Area for this Nomination

Note: If this nomination is for a public practice position, please provide the location of the home office or the center of service area.

Location of Veterinary Shortage: Holt, Rock, Boyd, Antelope Counties, Nebraska

(e.g., County, State/Insular Area)

Center of Service Area or

Location of Position: Highway 281, O'Neill, Nebraska 68763

(e.g., Address or Cross Street, Town/City, and Zip Code)

Type of Veterinary Practice Area/Discipline/Specialty

☐ Type I Shortage: Private Practice

Food Animal Medicine (at least 80 percent time)

Please select **one or more** specialties requested for this position:

- ☐ Beef Cattle
- ☐ Dairy Cattle
- ☐ Swine
- ☐ Poultry
- ☐ Small Ruminant
- ☐ Other _____

☒ Type II Shortage: Private Practice – Rural Area

Food Animal Medicine (at least 30 percent time)

Please select **one or more** specialties requested for this position:

- ☒ Beef Cattle
- ☒ Dairy Cattle
- ☒ Swine
- ☒ Poultry
- ☒ Small Ruminant
- ☒ Other : __Equine_____

☐ Type III Shortage: Public Practice (at least 49 percent time*)

Employer: _____ Position Title: _____

Please select **one or more** specialty/disciplinary areas.

- ☐ Food Safety
- ☐ Public Health
- ☐ Epidemiology
- ☐ Other: _____

Please describe the objectives of a veterinarian meeting this shortage situation as well as being located in the community, area, state/insular area, or position requested above (limit your response to 200 words or less).

The objective of a veterinarian in the area would be to provide quality veterinary care to maintain and improve overall animal welfare; maintain the health of animals that contribute to the food supply; and improve the veterinarian to food animal ratio. Other objectives would be to help fulfill the obligations of regulatory medicine for state and federal governments, as well as mitigate vulnerability to contagious and/or foreign animal diseases by maintaining an appropriate veterinarian to animal ratio.

According to the AVMA and NASS, the recommended area has 12 veterinarians, and about 804,000 food animals, including cattle, hogs, poultry, sheep and goats. In Holt County, there were approximately 374,000 food animals, but this number is believed to have grown due to a feedlot expansion and a new feedlot. The AVMA listing notes seven veterinarians within Holt County; at least one is near retirement and one is not full time. It should be noted the area, particularly Holt and Rock counties, is geographically huge, making for long drive times to assist clientele.

An awardee could expect 50 percent of his/her time to be spent on food animals on an annual basis, with some seasons being busier with food animal work than others.

Please describe the activities of a veterinarian meeting this shortage situation and being located in the community, area, state/insular area, or position requested above (limit your response to 200 words or less).

The veterinarian would be responsible for providing general food animal health care; for providing food animal health emergency care, particularly to help aid response time during periods of high volume needs such as calving season; for providing needed services related to governmental regulatory programs; and for providing assistance related to improving animal welfare and food safety through education and consulting with clients on programs like BQA/PQA, safe handling and withdrawal guidelines for prescription drugs and other appropriate advisory roles. It is expected this position could have some companion animal responsibilities as well.

Please describe any past efforts to recruit and retain a veterinarian in the shortage situation identified above (limit your response to 100 words or less).

Recruiting and retaining veterinarians for this area has been extremely difficult because starting salaries for food animal practitioners in this area generally are not competitive with other professional endeavors, particularly when the amount of educational debt for food animal practitioners can exceed \$140,000.

After the retirement of one practitioner in a clinic of three, it reportedly took the clinic five years to recruit a new veterinarian to the spot. There is genuine concern the new veterinarian may be lost in the coming year as it has been difficult to fund the position at a level to meet educational debt needs.

Please describe the risk of this veterinarian position not being secured or retained. Include the risk(s) to the production of a safe and wholesome food supply and to animal, human, and environmental health not only in the community but in the region, state/insular area, nation, and/or international community (limit your response to 250 words or less).

While there are practicing veterinarians in each of the four counties, the volume of food animals and the geographic expanse of the area create a significant risk to the health and welfare of animals and could negatively impact our safe, abundant food supply if an appropriate animal to vet ratio is not attained. It creates the potential for long wait times to receive livestock care, putting animals at risk and forcing livestock owners to make medical judgment calls which can be harmful to both livestock and the individual rancher/farmer.

Additionally, Nebraska's recent experience with bovine tuberculosis also highlights the potentially devastating impact of not having the appropriate veterinary capabilities to rapidly respond to animal disease situations.

In addition to adequate regular and emergency food animal care, clients need access to sound veterinary advice and service related to practices that can improve the quality and integrity of their animals that ultimately end up as food. The importance of this point is bolstered by the fact that Nebraska regularly ranks at top in annual red meat production and commercial cattle slaughter. Our state also is a major exporter of live animals and meat, so quality veterinary care that translates into healthy livestock is not just important for the veterinary clients, but important for consumers in the state, nation and world who receive the end food product.

Please indicate whether you consider this situation/position a candidate for a “service in emergency” agreement (limit your response to 100 words or less). Please see solicitations for additional information regarding the obligation of participants who enter into the “Service in Emergency” agreement.

NA in 2011 round

Authorized State or Insular Area Animal Health Official or designee:

Name: Dr. Dennis Hughes

Title: State Veterinarian

Organization: Nebraska Department of Agriculture

Email: Dennis.hughes@nebraska.gov

Telephone Number: 402-471-2351 or 800-572-2437
(Area code required)

Public reporting for OMB control number 0524-0046 is estimated to average two hours, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information, unless it displays a current valid OMB control number. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to NIFA, OEP, 800 9th St. SW, Washington, DC 20024, Attention Policy Section. Do not return the completed form to this address.

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